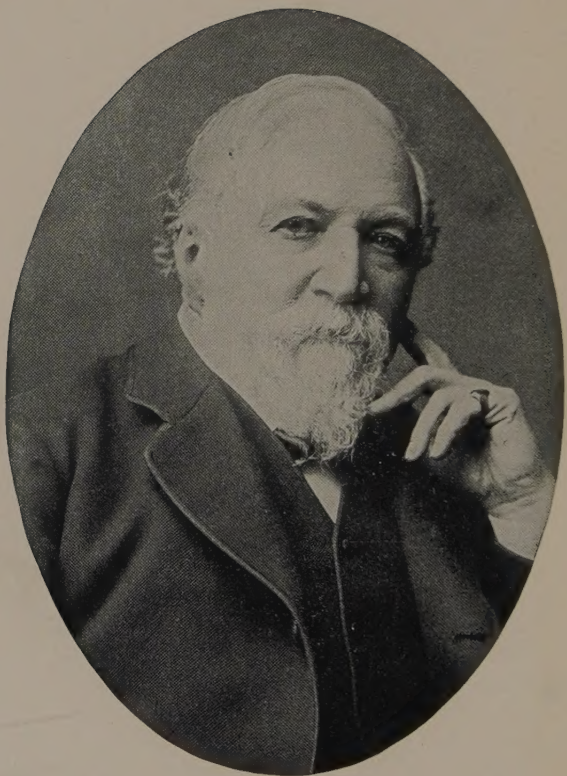


• Riverside Literature Series •

BROWNING'S
The Pied Piper
of
Hamelin
and Other Poems

Houghton, Mifflin & Co.



Robert Browning

The Riverside Literature Series

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

ROBERT BROWNING

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND NOTES



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

WHEN the student of English literature hereafter takes account of the latter half of the nineteenth century he will find two poets, who, by the amount and quality of their poetry and by their reflection of the age in which they lived, will be sure to demand his attention. These two are Tennyson and Browning; their lives were contemporaneous; there was a difference of but three years in the dates of their birth, and but three in the dates of their death. They both wrote from early manhood till the end of life, and the volume of verse of each was great, though Browning outran his contemporary in this respect.

But when one comes to compare the two poets in their art, he is at once struck with the difference between them. Tennyson's poetry is always melodious, exquisitely finished, and bears the marks of artistic labor expended upon a few familiar and recognized forms of English verse. Browning's poetry is sometimes melodious, sometimes in the line of English poetic tradition, but is more apt to impress one as vigorously independent of tradition, the individual note of a mind that is eager to experiment with new forms, and superabundant in artistic activity.

When one is considering the two poets in the subjects they choose and their mode of treatment, he is even more impressed by the divergence. Tennyson wrote dramas and most of his poetry has to do with persons, but the reader always thinks of the poet as narrating and describing and picturing. Browning was always dramatic. He had an unappeasable curiosity to know how persons would feel and act under various circumstances, and his mind was so fer-

tile, his imagination so vivid, and he had so keen an insight, that he was unceasingly inventing men and women and imagining them in all manner of conditions and times, ancient Greek heroes, mediæval knights, modern peasants, Italians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, lovers, fighters, scholars, and as he saw each not only in his outward appearance, but in the windings and turnings of his mind, so he could not keep out of his poetry the interest which he himself felt, and he sometimes chased down the thoughts of his characters till his imagination ran away with him.

Thus it often takes a nimble mind to follow the eager poet. It is a little like the attempt of the eye to take in all the exuberance of a Gothic cathedral and yet not lose sight of the large forms inclosing and bounding the whole. For there is a whole, and this is the strength of Browning's art, that however minute he may be in detail through his restlessness of vision which brings everything within range, he has the central conception firmly in mind and holds that with an extraordinary logical power. This is most noticeable in his massive masterpiece *The Ring and the Book*.

The poems contained in this brief collection are necessarily his shorter poems, and they show him on his lyrical almost as much as on his dramatic side, yet it will soon be seen that his most lyrical pieces have a distinct dramatic character. The collection is merely a convenient introduction to a poet whom one never really knows till one has read everything he has written. One of the pleasures afforded by a reading of Browning is the constant surprise which awaits one in discovering new, unsuspected fields. A sketch of the poet's life to be of the most value would be a study of the successive poetic ventures as illustrating the growth of his mind, but here we must content ourselves with a running catalogue of his works. There is little to relate save the appearance of one volume after another.

Robert Browning was born in the parish of St. Giles,

Camberwell, London, May 7, 1812. His mother was a Scottish gentlewoman, who had a love of music and drawing, and was of a serene, gentle, affectionate nature. She was a devout Christian, brought up in the Scottish kirk, but followed her husband afterward when he left the Church of England for the Congregationalist. Browning's father was a bank clerk in London, as his father before him had been. Thus the poet, born in London, had two generations of Londoners before him, and we may indulge the fancy that one who was to crowd his books with such a multitude as no poet since Shakespeare had gathered was nourished of a populous city.

Camberwell, at the time of Browning's childhood, was a suburb of London, with rural spaces and near access to the open country, though the stony foot of the metropolis was already stepping outward upon the pleasant lanes and fields. The boy kept a great variety of pets, owls and monkeys, magpies and hedgehogs, an eagle, snakes even, and was touched with the collector's pride, as when he started a collection of rare creatures with a couple of lady-birds brought home one winter day and placed in a box lined with cotton wool and labeled, "Animals found surviving in the depths of a severe winter." No one can read his poems attentively without perceiving how closely and sympathetically he had observed the humble life of nature.

Browning's father was passionately fond of his children and made them his companions from early life. One of the poet's recollections, his biographer tells us, "was that of sitting on his father's knees in the library, and listening with enthralled attention to the *Tale of Troy*, with marvelous illustrations among the glowing coals in the fireplace; with, below all, the vaguely heard accompaniment — from the neighboring room, where Mrs. Browning sat, 'in her chief happiness, her hour of darkness and solitude and music' — of a wild Gaelic lament, with its insistent falling cadences."

The boy grew up with much informal schooling. For one thing his father was a great reader, with tastes that led him into all sorts of out of the way fields; the two were companions and strayed together among eighteenth and seventeenth century writers. The country life, also, had a distinct influence on the growing boy. From the vantage-ground of a wooded spot near his home he could look out on the distant city lying on the western horizon, and fretting the evening sky with its spires and towers and ragged lines. The sight for him had a great fascination. Here would he lie for hours, looking and dreaming, and he has told how one night in his boyhood he stole out to the elms and saw the great city glimmering through the darkness. Even so early, it was human life, rather than nature or even books, that held his attention most.

Of formal schooling he had little, but after making head-way in the languages he matriculated at London University and spent two years there. In this period of private and public tuition, his scope was widening with systematic intent. He learned dancing, riding, boxing and fencing. He became versed in French. He visited galleries, and made some progress in drawing, especially from casts. He studied music with able teachers. He had a strong interest in the stage, and displayed on occasions a good deal of histrionic ability. It was the fashion at one time to fancy Shakespeare a lawyer and a physician, as well as an actor, from the familiarity with which he used the terms of these professions and arts. It would be easy to trace the variety of Browning's accomplishments in the easy reference in his verse to all manner of technical knowledge.

From earliest years he played with verse-making. His sister recalls that when he was a very little child he would walk round and round the dining-room table, spanning the table with his palm as he marked off the scansion of the verses he had composed. Even before this, rhyme had been put into his hands as an instrument, for his father had

taught him words by their rhymes, and aided his memorizing of Latin declensions in the same way. Naturally when he came to read poetry, he turned copyist, and first Pope, then Byron for a time was his inspiration. Then he fell into the hands of Shelley and Keats.

When he was twenty years old he wrote and published anonymously a poem *Pauline*, which was strongly tinged with his admiration for Shelley, but as a mark of Browning's independence, it was not at all in Shelley's manner, but rather the exercise of a youth who had tried to dramatize Shelley himself in his mind. The verses called *Memorabilia* in this collection show something of Browning's admiration of Shelley. The publication of *Pauline* was followed by a period of travel. He went to Russia nominally as secretary to the Russian consul-general, and was so attracted by diplomatic life, with its abundant opportunity for following intricate human movements, that he essayed to enter it, but failed.

Pauline was published in 1833. Two or three sonnets followed, but in 1835 appeared *Paracelsus*, the first poem to which he attached his name. It was characteristic of him that thus early he should be looking for subjects in the occult, and also that his characters, though they carried on a drama in the Middle Ages, should be rather projections of his own moral speculation. The book brought him some literary friendships, out of which grew the opportunity for writing the historical drama *Strafford*, in which his propensity to speculation was curbed by the demands of actual stage representation. He fell back into his own manner more distinctly in *Sordello*, which is the spiritual struggle of a youthful nature finding expression through remote and obscure historic forms.

Sordello was published in 1840, and was caviare to the general. But Browning was not a recluse, and he wanted to reach the ears of men and women in his own generation. So he began with a certain bravado the publication in cheap,

popular form of a series of poems and dramatic scenes, under the fantastical title *Bells and Pomegranates*. In this series, extending from 1841 to 1846, he struck the note again and again, in drama, lyric, and romance, which was to be the dominant note of his poetry, that disclosure of the soul of man in all manner of circumstances, as if the world were to the poet a great laboratory of souls, and he was forever to be engaged in solving, dissolving, and resolving the elements. The collection included the *Cavalier Tunes*, *Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kadr*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, *How They brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*, *The Boy and the Angel*, and *Home Thoughts from Abroad*.

The series contained also certain plays, notably *A Blot in the Scutcheon*; but although Browning, with his intense dramatic nature, could not fail in his writing to aim at dramatic representation on the stage, nature foiled him at every turn; for he was too exuberant, too eager in chasing down his fancies, and too much absorbed in what may be called the chemical properties of his characters, not to be impatient at the limitations which the stage presented.

He was ardently engaged in poetic interpretation of human life when he was suddenly caught in a more personal mesh than any of his own weaving. Elizabeth Barrett was a poet who through invalidism was practically a prisoner. Browning's verses came to her with a fullness of meaning, and hers reached him also with such fineness of sympathy, that it was not long before their acquaintance through writing became a personal attachment. Browning offered himself in marriage. He confronted the indomitable refusal of Miss Barrett's father. A physician had held out hopes that a removal to Italy would give the invalid a chance to regain some degree of health, but Mr. Barrett, for some not very clear reason, refused his consent to a journey thither with her brother. It was then that Browning, who can readily be conceived of as a masterful man,

won Miss Barrett's consent to a sudden and clandestine marriage, and a journey to Italy as his wife.

They were married September 12, 1846. For a week the husband and wife did not see each other. Then they met by agreement and went to Paris. Mr. Barrett never forgave his daughter, but so far as Mrs. Browning's physical well-being was concerned, it is clear that the marriage gave her a new lease of life; and what seemed at the moment an audacious taking of fate into their own hands proved to be a case where nature obtained her best of both. Mrs. Browning was indeed let out of prison into a large and free life.

The passionate love which Browning had for his wife often breaks through the thin shell of dramatic representation. One glimpse of it may be had in *By the Fireside*. Mrs. Browning's flame-like aspiration enveloped her husband in *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. It is, moreover, a strong witness to the independence of mind which refused to surrender to love, that though Mrs. Browning was a wistful strainer after light through the mists of spiritualism, Browning was a sturdy scoffer, as he has made evident in more than one poem.

During the fifteen years of their married life the Brownings lived for the most part in Italy, with occasional summers in England and long sojourns in Paris. Browning wrote less during this period than he did before and after, yet it was midway in the time that he published the collection of poems *Men and Women*, which many maintain to have marked the high water of his genius. In this group are *Love among the Ruins*, *By the Fireside*, *The Last Ride Together*, *The Patriot*, *The Twins*, *A Grammarian's Funeral*.

The death of Mrs. Browning in 1861 closed this most beautiful human companionship. It made also a great change in Browning's habit of life, and no doubt affected in important ways his poetical productiveness. He left

Italy for England, where he was educating his son. By some strange caprice he chose to make his home in an ugly part of London, and he approached it through a region of disorder and squalor. But with his robust nature he denied himself the luxury of a persistent solitariness, and little by little he returned to society.

In taking up work again he made excursions in Greek literature, reading Euripides once more. He brought together a new collection of his poems under the title *Dramatis Personæ*, which includes *Rabbi Ben Ezra* and *Prospice*, and he busied himself in the strange mass of intrigue and cross-purposes which resulted in his greatest poem, *The Ring and the Book*, in 1868. After the publication of that the only new departure of his genius was in the group of poems built upon the foundation of Greek poetry. In 1871 appeared *Balaustion's Adventure*; in 1875 *Aristophanes' Apology*, and in 1877 *The Agamemnon of Æschylus*. These poems represent the thought and criticism of a Gothic mind confronting and admiring Greek art and thought. Browning in these works is not a reproducer in his own terms of Greek life; he is a poet of varied experience, who, coming in contact with a great and distinct manifestation of human life, is moved to strike in here also with his thought and fancy, and, because of the very elemental nature of the material, to find the keenest delight in exercising his genius upon it.

In the last years of his life, when fame came to him, and his versatility made him a ready companion, he led a semi-public life. He was in demand in all directions. He read widely, talked brilliantly, and kept up a large correspondence. He added now and then a volume to his collection of writings, and his very last, *Asolando*, which appeared almost on the day of his death, bore testimony in its title to his affection for Asolo, the village of the silk-spinner Pippa, where he was at the time proposing to buy a villa.

He died in Venice at his son's home, December 12, 1889.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the Poets' Corner, where he belongs among the great and the little singers of England. His multitudinous verse contains poems which have an enduring place in literature, but in the carelessness of his profuse nature, he left Time to winnow his lines, and many will be blown to the winds.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN, AND OTHER POEMS.

PIPPA'S SONG.

The first of Browning's writings to win him popularity was his drama, *Pippa Passes*. His biographer says of the origin of the play: "Mr. Browning was walking alone, in a wood near Dulwich, when the image flashed upon him of some one walking thus alone through life; one apparently too obscure to leave a trace of his or her passage, yet exercising a lasting though unconscious influence at every step of it; and the image shaped itself into the little silk-winder of Asolo, Felippa, or Pippa." So Pippa sings this song, all unaware that two guilty souls overhear her, and are suddenly made conscious of their guilt.

THE year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

CAVALIER TUNES.

These three songs were included by Browning in a general group of *Dramatic Lyrics*. These, the poet says, are "often lyric in expression, always dramatic in principle, and so many utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine." Thus, these *Cavalier Tunes* are the imagined songs of followers of Charles I. and enemies of Oliver Cromwell and the Roundheads. The third was originally entitled

My Wife Gertrude, but was renamed by the author. It is supposed to be sung by a party of gentlemen as they saddle preparatory to relieving a besieged castle. The three songs have been set to music by Dr. Villiers Stanford.

I. MARCHING ALONG.

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,
 Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing :
 And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
 And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
 5 Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
 Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles ! Pym and such carles
 To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous
 paroles !

Cavaliers, up ! Lips from the cup,
 10 Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
 Till you 're —

CHORUS. — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
 Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
 this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
 Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as well !
 15 England, good cheer ! Rupert is near !
 • Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

1. There was a strong following of the king in Kent, so that, not long before the end of the war, Fairfax had to suppress an insurrection there. Browning probably used the name Byng with no more direct reference than would be inferred from the fact that the Byngs were a Kentish family. The great admiral, Sir George Byng, was from the county.

14. Six years before, Browning had written his drama of *Stafford*, and in that had used the historic figures of Hampden, Fiennes, Pym, and Sir Henry Vane, the "young Harry" of this line.

CHO. — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this
song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his snarls
20 To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent carles!
Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham, fresh for the fight,

CHO. — March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this
song!

II. GIVE A ROUSE.

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

5 Who gave me the goods that went since?
Who raised me the house that sank once?
Who helped me to gold I spent since?
Who found me in wine you drank once?

CHO. — King Charles, and who'll do him right
now?

10 King Charles, and who's ripe for fight
now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite
now,

King Charles!

22. There is no further historical basis for these *Cavalier Tunes* than the general condition of affairs, but it will be remembered that the king raised his standard at Nottingham, August 22, 1642, and there began to gather his followers about him.

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
By the old fool's side that begot him?

15 For whom did he cheer and laugh else,
While Noll's damned troopers shot him?

CHO. — King Charles, and who 'll do him right
now?

King Charles, and who 's ripe for fight
now?

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's despite now,
20 King Charles!

III. BOOT AND SADDLE.

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

CHO. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

5 Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you 'd say;
Many 's the friend there, will listen and pray
"God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay —
CHO. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
10 Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array:
Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay,
CHO. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and gay,
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay!"
15 I 've better counsellors; what counsel they?
CHO. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

10. There is a Castle Brancepeth near Durham. Was it besieged in the civil war?

THE LOST LEADER.

Browning was beset with questions by people asking if he referred to Wordsworth in this poem. He answered the question more than once, as an artist would: the following letter to Rev. A. B. Grosart, the editor of Wordsworth's *Prose Works*, sufficiently states his position.

"19 Warwick-Crescent, W., Feb. 24, '75.

"DEAR MR. GROSART, — I have been asked the question you now address me with, and as duly answered it, I can't remember how many times; there is no sort of objection to one more assurance or rather confession, on my part, that I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about 'handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon.' These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore. But just as in the tapestry on my wall I can recognize figures which have *struck out* a fancy, on occasion, that though truly enough thus derived, yet would be preposterous as a copy, so, though I dare not deny the original of my little poem, I altogether refuse to have it considered as the 'very effigies' of such a moral and intellectual superiority.

"Faithfully yours,

"ROBERT BROWNING."

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat —
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
 Lost all the others she lets us devote;
 5 They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
 So much was theirs who so little allowed:
 How all our copper had gone for his service!
 Rags — were they purple, his heart had been
 proud!
 We that had loved him so, followed him, honored
 him,

- 10 Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us, — they watch from
their graves!
- 15 He alone breaks from the van and the freemen, —
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering, — not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us, — not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done, — while he boasts his quiescence,
- 20 Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
- 25 Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part — the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him — strike gallantly,
- 30 Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

THE PATRIOT.

AN OLD STORY.

In the first form of this poem, the scene was laid in Brescia, and it was naturally inferred that the poet had Arnold of Brescia in mind ; but he denied the inference. It is imaginative, not historical, in its dramatic action. It was possibly to relieve the poem of its apparent distinct reference to history that he removed the name of Brescia when revising his poems.

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
5 A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, " Good folk, mere noise repels —
But give me your sun from yonder skies !"
10 They had answered, " And afterward, what else ? "

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
To give it my loving friends to keep !
Naught man could do, have I left undone :
And you see my harvest, what I reap
15 This very day, now a year is run.

There 's nobody on the house-tops now —
Just a palsied few at the windows set ;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate — or, better yet,
20 By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

8 *HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS.*

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
25 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?" — God might question; now instead,
30 'T is God shall repay: I am safer so.

"HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS
FROM GHENT TO AIX."

Browning wrote to an American inquirer about this poem: "There is no sort of historical foundation for the poem about 'Good News from Ghent.' I wrote it under the bulwark of a vessel, off the African coast, after I had been at sea long enough to appreciate even the fancy of a gallop on the back of a certain good horse 'York,' then in my stable at home. It was written in pencil on the fly-leaf of Bartoli's *Simboli*, I remember." It is interesting to see how, forty years later, Browning was writing a poem on Bartoli, in his *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*. As for the stages in this ride, a reader with a sufficiently minute map by him can trace the progress from Ghent across Belgium to Aix-la-Chapelle, a distance as the crow flies of between fifty and sixty miles.

[16—]

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Direk galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts
undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
5 Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our
place;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
10 Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique
right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'T was moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned
clear;

15 At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld, 't was morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the
half-chime,
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
20 And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray:

25 And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent
back

For my voice, and the other pricked out on his
track;

And one eye's black intelligence, — ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and
anon

30 His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

10 *HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS.*

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay
spur !

Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault 's not in her,
We 'll remember at Aix " — for one heard the quick
wheeze

Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering
knees,

35 And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
40 'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like
chaff ;

Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And " Gallop," gasped Joris, " for Aix is in sight ! "

" How they 'll greet us ! " — and all in a moment
his roan

Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;
45 And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim.
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall.
50 Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without
peer ;

Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise,
bad or good,

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

55 And all I remember is — friends flocking round
 As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the
 ground;
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of
 mine,
 As I poured down his throat our last measure of
 wine,
 Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
 60 Was no more than his due who brought good news
 from Ghent.

THROUGH THE METIDJA TO ABD-EL-KADR.

The date of this poem, 1842, intimates that Browning wrote it during the interest which was excited by the Arab chieftain whose name signifies "Servant of God." Abd-el-Kader led his Algerian countrymen against the French, and showed a courage and skill which put him at the head of the Arab tribes. The French finally invaded Algeria in 1841 with a very large army, and though Abd-el-Kader kept them long at bay, he was finally captured in 1847. In this poem Browning imagines one of Abd-el-Kader's followers riding through the desert to join his leader.

As I ride, as I ride,
 With a full heart for my guide,
 So its tide rocks my side,
 As I ride, as I ride,
 5 That, as I were double-eyed,
 He, in whom our Tribes confide,
 Is descried, ways untried,
 As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride
 10 To our Chief and his Allied,
 Who dares chide my heart's pride
 As I ride, as I ride?

Or are witnesses denied —

Through the desert waste and wide

15 Do I glide unespied

As I ride, as I ride?

As I ride, as I ride,

When an inner voice has cried,

The sands slide, nor abide

20 (As I ride, as I ride)

O'er each visioned homicide

That came vaunting (has he lied?)

To reside — where he died,

As I ride, as I ride.

25 As I ride, as I ride

Ne'er has spur my swift horse plied,

Yet his hide, streaked and pied,

As I ride, as I ride,

Shows where sweat has sprung and dried, —

30 Zebra-footed, ostrich-thighed —

How has vied stride with stride

As I ride, as I ride!

As I ride, as I ride,

Could I loose what Fate has tied,

35 Ere I pried, she should hide

(As I ride, as I ride)

All that's meant me — satisfied

When the Prophet and the Bride

Stop veins I'd have subside

40 As I ride, as I ride!

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

A CHILD'S STORY.

(Written for, and inscribed to, W. M. the Younger.)

Macready's eldest son when a child was confined to the house by illness, and Browning wrote this *jeu d'esprit* to amuse the child and give him a subject for illustrative drawings. Browning might have got the story from various sources, as from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and Howell's *Familiar Letters*; but the most likely source was the earliest English account by Richard Verstegan in his *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*, published in 1605. Dr. Samuel Johnson refers to the tale in an allusive fashion in his *Taxation no Tyranny*.

I.

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
5 A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

II.

10 Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,
15 Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
20 In fifty different sharps and flats.

III.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking :
“ ‘T is clear,” cried they, “ our Mayor ’s a noddy ;
And as for our Corporation — shocking
25 To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can’t or won’t determine
What ’s best to rid us of our vermin !
You hope, because you ’re old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease ?
30 Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we ’re lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we ’ll send you packing ! ”
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV.

35 An hour they sat in council ;
At length the Mayor broke silence :
“ For a guilder I ’d my ermine gown sell,
I wish I were a mile hence !
It ’s easy to bid one rack one’s brain —
40 I ’m sure my poor head aches again,
I ’ve scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap ! ”
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap ?
45 “ Bless us,” cried the Mayor, “ what ’s that ? ”
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat ;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
60 Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous

For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
“Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!”

V.

55 “Come in!” the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
60 With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in;
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
65 And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: “It’s as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom’s tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!”

VI.

70 He advanced to the council-table:
And, “Please your honors,” said he, “I’m able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
75 After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper.”
80 (And here they noticed round his neck

- A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
85 As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
“Yet,” said he, “poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
90 Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats:
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
95 Will you give me a thousand guilders?”
“One? fifty thousand!” — was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII.

- Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
100 As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
105 Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;

89. The Great Cham or Khan of Tartary was a figure made familiar to Europe in the Pied Piper's day by Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller.

- 110 And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
115 Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives —
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
120 And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished!
— Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
125 (As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary:
Which was, “ At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
130 Into a cider-press’s gripe :
And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter casks :
135 And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, ‘ Oh rats, rejoice !
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
140 Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon ! ’
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
Already staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,

Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'
145 — I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII.

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles,
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
150 Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!" — when suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, "First, if you please, my thousand guild-
ers!"

IX.

155 A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
160 Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
165 We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
170 But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X.

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
175 "No trifling! I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
180 Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI.

185 "How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
190 Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII.

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
195 Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling;
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
200 Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scat-
tering,

Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
205 And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
210 Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by,
— Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
215 And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However, he turned from South to West,
220 And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
“He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
225 And we shall see our children stop!”
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children fol-
lowed,
230 And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say, all? No! One was lame,

And could not dance the whole of the way ;
And in after years, if you would blame
235 His sadness, he was used to say, —
“ It ’s dull in our town since my playmates left !
I can’t forget that I ’m bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
240 For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new ;
245 The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles’ wings :
And just as I became assured
250 My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
255 And never hear of that country more ! ”

XIV.

Alas, alas ! for Hamelin !
There came into many a burgher’s pate
A text which says that heaven’s gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
260 As the needle’s eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent East, West, North, and South,
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men’s lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart’s content,

265 If he 'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 't was a lost endeavor,
And Piper and dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
270 Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
“ And so long after what happened here
On the Twenty-second of July,
275 Thirteen hundred and seventy-six : ”
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it the Pied Piper's Street —
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
280 Was sure for the future to lose his labor.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
285 And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
290 That in Transylvania there 's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbors lay such stress,

275. So Verstegan ; but another writer, seventy years later, Nathaniel Wanley, in his *The Wonders of the Little World*, is equally exact in giving another date, June 26, 1284. Howell, writing in 1647, says loosely, “ a matter of two hundred and fifty years since.”

To their fathers and mothers having risen
 295 Out of some subterraneous prison
 Into which they were trepanned
 Long time ago in a mighty band
 Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
 But how or why, they don't understand.

XV.

300 So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
 Of scores out with all men — especially pipers !
 And, whether they pipe us free fróm rats or fróm
 mice,
 If we've promised them aught, let us keep our
 promise !

MEETING AT NIGHT.

✓ This and its companion piece were published originally simply as
Night and Morning.

THE gray sea and the long black land ;
 And the yellow half-moon large and low ;
 And the startled little waves that leap
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
 5 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach ;
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears ;
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
 10 And blue spurt of a lighted match,
 And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
 Than the two hearts beating each to each !

PARTING AT MORNING.

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
 And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
 And straight was a path of gold for him,
 And the need of a world of men for me.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS.

Written at Rome in the winter of 1853-1854, and included at first in *Men and Women*, the collection which contains the strongest of Browning's poems, dealing with love between man and woman. He had then been married about eight years.

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 5 Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or
 stop
 As they crop —
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,
 (So they say)
 Of our country's very capital, its prince
 10 Ages since
 Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
 Peace or war.

Now, — the country does not even boast a tree,
 As you see,
 15 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
 From the hills
 Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
 Into one,)

Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
20 Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be
pressed,
Twelve abreast.

25 And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was !
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
30 Stock or stone —
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Leng ago ;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of
shame
Struck them tame ;
35 And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now, — the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
40 Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom
winks
Through the chinks —
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
45 And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
50 Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away —
55 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breath-
less, dumb
60 Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the
glades'
Colonnades,
65 All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts, — and then,
All the men!
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
70 Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
75 And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force —
Gold, of course.

Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
 80 Earth's returns
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
 Love is best.

THE TWINS.

“Give” and “It-shall-be-given-unto-you.”

Originally published in 1854, in connection with a poem by Mrs. Browning, *A Plea for the Ragged Schools of London*, in a volume issued by Mrs. Browning's sister for a bazaar to benefit the “Refuge for Young Destitute Girls.” The poem is a poetical rendering of a passage from Luther's *Table Talk*: “There is in Austria a monastery which, in former times, was very rich, and remained rich so long as it was charitable to the poor; but when it ceased to give, then it became indigent, and is so to this day. Not long since, a poor man went there and solicited alms, which was denied him; he demanded the cause why they refused to give for God's sake. The porter of the monastery answered, ‘We are become poor;’ whereupon the mendicant said: ‘The cause of your poverty is this: Ye had formerly in this monastery two brethren, the one named *Date* [Latin for “give”] and the other *Dabitur* [“it shall be given you”]. The former ye thrust out, and the other went away of himself.’”

GRAND rough old Martin Luther
 Bloomed fables — flowers on furze,
 The better the uncouth:
 Do roses stick like burrs?

5 A beggar asked an alms
 One day at an abbey-door,
 Said Luther; but, seized with qualms,
 The Abbot replied, “We're poor!

“Poor, who had plenty once,
 10 When gifts fell thick as rain:

But they give us naught, for the nonce,
And how should we give again ? ”

Then the beggar, “ See your sins !
Of old, unless I err,
15 Ye had brothers for inmates, twins,
Date and Dabitur.

“ While Date was in good case
Dabitur flourished too :
For Dabitur’s lenten face
20 No wonder if Date rue.

“ Would ye retrieve the one ?
Try and make plump the other !
When Date’s penance is done,
Dabitur helps his brother.

25 “ Only, beware relapse ! ”
Thé Abbot hung his head.
This beggar might be perhaps
An angel, Luther said.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP.

The storming of Ratisbon took place in May, 1809, during Napoleon’s Austrian campaign. Mrs. Orr reports the incident as an actual fact, except that the hero was a man, not a boy.

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon :
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day ;
5 With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,

Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused "My plans
10 That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall," —
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
15 Full-galloping ; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
20 You hardly could suspect —
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

25 "Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon !
The Marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
30 Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him !" The chief's eye flashed ; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes

6. Not unlikely Browning had in his mind Haydon's portrait
of Napoleon.

35 A film the mother-eagle's eye
 When her bruised eaglet breathes ;
 " You 're wounded ! " " Nay," the soldier's pride
 Touched to the quick, he said :
 " I 'm killed, Sire ! " And his chief beside,
 40 Smiling the boy fell dead.

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL.

A PICTURE AT FANO.

The picture which suggested this poem is in the church of St. Augustine at Fano. " It represents an angel standing with outstretched wings by a little child. The child is half-kneeling on a kind of pedestal, while the angel joins its hands in prayer ; its gaze is directed upward toward the sky, from which cherubs are looking down."

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
 That child, when thou hast done with him, for
 me !

Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 5 And time come for departure, thou, suspending,
 Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
 Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
 From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
 10 And suddenly my head is covered o'er
 With those wings, white above the child who prays
 Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee guarding
 Me, out of all the world ; for me, discarding
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its
 door.

15 I would not look up thither past thy head
 Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
 For I should have thy gracious face instead,
 Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low
 Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
 20 And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
 Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
 25 Pressing the brain, which too much thought ex-
 pands,
 Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
 Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
 And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

 How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
 30 I think how I should view the earth and skies
 And sea, when once again my brow was bared
 After thy healing, with such different eyes.
 O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
 And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
 35 What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
 (Alfred, dear friend!) — that little child to pray,

36. Guercino, or the Squinter, was properly Giovanni Francesco Barbieri.

37. The Alfred of the poem was Alfred Domett, a companion of Browning in his boyhood, who, four or five years before the date of this poem, went to New Zealand. Browning's poem, *Waring*, was called out by Domett's sudden departure from London. He was himself a writer of verses.

Holding the little hands up, each to each
 Pressed gently, — with his own head turned away
 40 Over the earth where so much lay before him
 Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,
 And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
 To sit and see him in his chapel there,
 45 And drink his beauty to our soul's content
 — My angel with me too: and since I care
 For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,
 Fraught with a pathos so magnificent) —

50 And since he did not work thus earnestly
 At all times, and has else endured some wrong —
 I took one thought his picture struck from me,
 And spread it out, translating it to song.
 My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?
 55 How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?
 This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

MEMORABILIA.

Browning, in his early manhood, was greatly impressed by Shelley. Not only is the poet's influence seen in *Pauline*, but later Browning confessed his obligation to Shelley in an introduction which he wrote to a volume of Shelley's *Letters*, which turned out to be spurious. The book was at once suppressed. The essay by Browning is reprinted in the Cambridge Edition of his *Poems*.

AH, did you once see Shelley plain,
 And did he stop and speak to you,
 And did you speak to him again?
 How strange it seems and new!

5 But you were living before that,
 And also you are living after ;
 And the memory I started at —
 My starting moves your laughter !

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
 10 And a certain use in the world no doubt,
 Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
 'Mid the blank miles round about :

For there I picked up on the heather,
 And there I put inside my breast,
 15 A moulted feather, an eagle feather !
 Well, I forget the rest.

HERVÉ RIEL.

This ballad was printed first in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March, 1871. In a letter to Mr. George Smith, one of the publishers of the magazine, Browning stated that he intended to devote the proceeds of the poem to the aid of the people of Paris suffering from the Franco-German war. The publisher generously seconded his resolve and paid one hundred pounds for the poem. The poem is faithful to the incident of Hervé Riel, with the trivial exception that the holiday to see his wife was for the remainder of his life instead of for one day.

I.

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred
 ninety-two,
 Did the English fight the French, — woe to
 France !

1. The battle of La Hogue was fought May 19, 1692. The English and Dutch were pitted against the French, and the result of the battle was the transfer of sea-power from France to England.

And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through
the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of
sharks pursue,
5 Came crowding ship on ship to Saint Malo on
the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II.

'T was the squadron that escaped, with the victor in
full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship,
Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
10 Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take us quick —
or, quicker still,
Here 's the English can and will!"

III.

35 Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and
leapt on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these
to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage
scarred and scored,
Shall the 'Formidable' here with her twelve and
eighty guns
Think to make the river-mouth by the single
narrow way,

20 Trust to enter where 't is ticklish for a craft of
 twenty tons,
 And with flow at full beside?
 Now, 't is slackest ebb of tide.
 Reach the mooring? Rather say,
 While rock stands or water runs,
 25 Not a ship will leave the bay!"

IV.

Then was called a council straight.
 Brief and bitter the debate:
 "Here 's the English at our heels; would you have
 them take in tow
 All that 's left us of the fleet, linked together stern
 and bow,
 30 For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
 Better run the ships aground!"
 (Ended Damfreville his speech).
 "Not a minute more to wait!
 Let the Captains all and each
 35 Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on
 the beach!
 France must undergo her fate.

V.

"Give the word!" But no such word
 Was ever spoke or heard;
 For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid
 all these
 40 — A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate — first,
 second, third?
 No such man of mark, and meet
 With his betters to compete!

But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville
for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisick-
ese.

VI.

45 And "What mockery or malice have we here?"
cries Hervé Riel:

"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cow-
ards, fools, or rogues?

Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the
soundings, tell

On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every
swell,

'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river
disembogues?

50 Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the
lying's for?

Morn and eve, night and day,

Have I piloted your bay,

Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Soli-
dor.

Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were
worse than fifty Hagues!

55 Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, be-
lieve me there's a way!

Only let me lead the line,

Have the biggest ship to steer,

Get this 'Formidable' clear,

Make the others follow mine,

60 And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I
know well,

44. Le Croisic is a small fishing village near the mouth of the Loire. Browning sometimes sojourned there, and made it the scene of a long poem, *The Two Poets of Croisic*.

Right to Solidor past Grève,
 And there lay them safe and sound ;
 And if one ship misbehave,
 — Keel so much as grate the ground,
 65 Why, I 've nothing but my life, — here 's my head ! ”
 cries Hervé Riel.

VII.

Not a minute more to wait.
 “ Steer us in, then, small and great !
 Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron ! ”
 cried its chief.
 Captains, give the sailor place !
 70 He is Admiral, in brief.
 Still the north-wind, by God's grace !
 See the noble fellow's face
 As the big ship, with a bound,
 Clears the entry like a hound,
 75 Keeps the passage as its inch of way were the wide
 sea's profound !
 See, safe through shoal and rock,
 How they follow in a flock,
 Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates
 the ground,
 Not a spar that comes to grief !
 80 The peril, see, is past,
 All are harbored to the last,
 And just as Hervé Riel hollas “ Anchor ! ” — sure
 as fate,
 Up the English come — too late !

VIII.

So, the storm subsides to calm :
 85 They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
90 Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the
Rance!"
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
95 "This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
100 As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
105 I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
110 'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not
Damfreville."

X.

Then a beam of fun outbroke
 115 On the bearded mouth that spoke,
 As the honest heart laughed through
 Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
 " Since I needs must say my say,
 Since on board the duty's done,
 120 And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is
 it but a run? —
 Since 't is ask and have, I may —
 Since the others go ashore —
 Come! A good whole holiday!
 Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the
 Belle Aurore! "
 125 That he asked and that he got, — nothing more.

XI.

Name and deed alike are lost:
 Not a pillar nor a post
 In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
 Not a head in white and black
 130 On a single fishing smack,
 In memory of the man but for whom had gone to
 wrack
 All that France saved from the fight whence Eng-
 land bore the bell.
 Go to Paris: rank on rank
 Search the heroes flung pell-mell
 135 On the Louvre, face and flank!
 You shall look long enough ere you come to
 Hervé Riel.
 So, for better and for worse,
 Hervé Riel, accept my verse!

In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
 140 Save the squadron, honor France, love thy wife the
 Belle Aurore!

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD.

This and the following poem were first published along with *Beer*, which bore the name *Here's to Nelson's Memory*, under the general heading, *Home-Thoughts, from Abroad*. The final member of the group, *Home Thoughts, from the Sea*, was written under the same circumstances as the poem, *How They brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*.

OH, to be in England
 Now that April's there,
 And whoever wakes in England
 Sees, some morning, unaware,
 5 That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
 In England — now!

And after April, when May follows,
 10 And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
 Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
 Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent spray's edge —
 That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice
 over,
 15 Lest you should think he never could recapture
 The first fine careless rapture!
 And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
 All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
 The buttercups, the little children's dower
 20 — Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA.

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the Northwest
died away ;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into
Cadiz Bay ;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafal-
gar lay ;
In the dimmest Northeast distance dawned Gibralt-
ar, grand and gray ;
5 “ Here and here did England help me : how can I
help England ? ” — say,
Whoso turns, as I, this evening, turn to God to
praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

THE BOY AND THE ANGEL.

MORNING, evening, noon and night,
“ Praise God ! ” sang Theocrite.

Then to his poor trade he turned,
Whereby the daily meal was earned.

5 Hard he labored, long and well ;
O'er his work the boy's curls fell.

But ever, at each period,
He stopped and sang, “ Praise God ! ”

3. Trafalgar was the scene of Nelson's victory over the com-
bined fleets of France and Spain.

Then back again his curls he threw,
10 And cheerful turned to work anew.

Said Blaise, the listening monk, "Well done;
I doubt not thou art heard, my son :

"As well as if thy voice to-day
Were praising God, the Pope's great way.

15 "This Easter Day, the Pope at Rome
Praises God from Peter's dome."

Said Theocrite, "Would God that I
Might praise him that great way, and die !"

Night passed, day shone,
20 And Theocrite was gone.

With God a day endures alway,
A thousand years are but a day.

God said in heaven, "Nor day nor night
Now brings the voice of my delight."

25 Then Gabriel, like a rainbow's birth,
Spread his wings and sank to earth ;

Entered, in flesh, the empty cell,
Lived there, and played the craftsman well ;

And morning, evening, noon and night,
30 Praised God in place of Theocrite.

And from a boy, to youth he grew :
The man put off the stripling's hue :

The man matured and fell away
Into the season of decay :

35 And ever o'er the trade he bent,
And ever lived on earth content.

(He did God's will ; to him, all one
If on the earth or in the sun.)

God said, " A praise is in mine ear ; |
40 There is no doubt in it, no fear :

" So sing old worlds, and so
New worlds that from my footstool go.

" Clearer loves sound other ways :
I miss my little human praise."

45 Then forth sprang Gabriel's wings, off fell
The flesh disguise, remained the cell.

'T was Easter Day : he flew to Rome,
And paused above St. Peter's dome.

In the tiring-room close by
50 The great outer gallery,

With his holy vestments dight,
Stood the new Pope, Theocrite :

And all his past career
Came back upon him clear,

55 Since when, a boy, he plied his trade,
Till on his life the sickness weighed ;

And in his cell, when death drew near,
An angel in a dream brought cheer :

And rising from the sickness drear,
60 He grew a priest, and now stood here.

To the East with praise he turned,
And on his sight the angel burned.

“ I bore thee from thy craftsman’s cell,
And set thee here ; I did not well.

65 “ Vainly I left my angel-sphere,
Vain was thy dream of many a year.

“ Thy voice’s praise seemed weak ; it dropped —
Creation’s chorus stopped !

“ Go back and praise again
70 The early way, while I remain.

“ With that weak voice of our disdain,
Take up creation’s pausing strain.

“ Back to the cell and poor employ :
Resume the craftsman and the boy ! ”

80 Theocrite grew old at home ;
A new Pope dwelt in Peter’s dome.

One vanished as the other died :
They sought God side by side.

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL.

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING IN EUROPE.

The term "grammarian" must be taken in the sense accepted at the time of the Renaissance, — that of a scholar learned in the ancient tongues, especially Greek, and minute in his critical familiarity with the literature of Greece and Rome. He represented that enthusiasm for learning which finds its decay in the pedant. The speaker is the leader of the company who are bearing the body of their master to his grave on the mountain; his directions to his companions are in the parentheses. The aim of this poem, says R. H. Hutton, "is to bring out the strong, implicit faith in an eternal career which there must be in any man who devotes his life wholly to the preliminary toil of mastering the rudiments of language."

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.

Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes
Each in its tether

5 Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow :

Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock-row !

That 's the appropriate country ; there, man 's
thought

10 Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.

Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop ;
Seek we sepulture

15 On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
Crowded with culture !

All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels ;
Clouds overcome it ;

No ! yonder sparkle is the citadel's

20 Circling its summit.

Thither our path lies ; wind we up the heights ;
Wait ye the warning ?

Our low life was the level's and the night's ;
He's for the morning.

25 Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
'Ware the beholders !

This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd ! sleep, darkling thorpe and
croft,

30 Safe from the weather !

He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
Singing together,

He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo !

35 Long he lived nameless : how should Spring take
note

Winter would follow ?

Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone !
Cramped and diminished,

Moaned he, " New measures, other feet anon !

40 My dance is finished " ?

No, that's the world's way : (keep the mountain-
side,

Make for the city !)

He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
Over men's pity ;

45 Left play for work, and grappled with the world
Bent on escaping :

" What's in the scroll," quoth he, " thou keepest
furled ?

Show me their shaping,

- Theirs who most studied man, the bard and sage, —
 50 Give!" — So, he gowned him,
 Straight got by heart that book to its last page :
 Learned, we found him.
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
 Accents uncertain :
 55 "Time to taste life," another would have said,
 "Up with the curtain!"
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes next?
 Patience a moment!
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,
 60 Still there 's the comment.
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,
 Painful or easy!
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
 Ay, nor feel queasy."
 65 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
 When he had learned it,
 When he had gathered all books had to give!
 Sooner, he spurned it.
 Image the whole, then execute the parts —
 70 Fancy the fabric
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
 Ere mortar dab brick!

- (Here's the town-gate reached : there's the market-
 place
 Gaping before us.)
 75 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
 (Hearten our chorus!)
 That before living he'd learn how to live —
 No end to learning :
 Earn the means first — God surely will contrive
 80 Use for our earning.

Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes :
Live now or never !"

He said, "What's time ? Leave Now for dogs and
apes !

Man has Forever."

85 Back to his book then : deeper drooped his head :
Calculus racked him :

Leadens before, his eyes grew dross of lead :
Tussis attacked him.

"Now, master, take a little rest !" — not he !

90 (Caution redoubled, .

Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly !)
Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon

95 He (soul hydroptic with a sacred thirst)
Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure

100 Bad is our bargain !

Was it not great ? did he not throw on God,
(He loves the burthen) —

God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen ?

105 Did he not magnify the mind, show clear
Just what it all meant ?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,
Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing — heaven's success

110 Found, or earth's failure :

86. *Calculus* (stone), a hard concretion formed within the body.

88. *Tussis*, a cough.

“Wilt thou trust death or not?” He answered
 “Yes!

Hence with life's pale lure!”

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
 Sees it and does it:

115 This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
 Dies ere he knows it.

That low man goes on adding one to one,
 His hundred's soon hit:

This high man, aiming at a million,
 120 Misses an unit.

That, has the world here — should he need the next,
 Let the world mind him.

This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
 Seeking shall find him!

125 So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
 Ground he at grammar;

Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:
 While he could stammer

He settled *Hoti's* business — let it be!

130 Properly based *Oun* —

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,

129. *Hoti* is the Greek particle “that,” which has a nicely discriminated use.

130. *Oun* is another particle, of an illative sense.

131. The enclitic *De* is thus referred to in a letter from Browning to the *London Daily News*: “Sir, — In a clever article this morning you speak of ‘the doctrine of enclitic *De*,’ ‘which, with all deference to Mr. Browning, in point of fact does not exist.’ No, not to Mr. Browning; but pray defer to Herr Buttmann [a learned German grammarian], whose fifth list of ‘enclitics’ ends with ‘the inseparable *De* ;’ or to Curtius, whose fifth list ends also with ‘*De* (meaning *towards* and as a demonstrative appendage).’ That this is not to be confounded with the accentuated ‘*De*, meaning *but*,’ was the ‘doctrine’ which the Grammarian bequeathed to those capable of receiving it.”

Dead from the waist down.

Well, here 's the platform, here 's the proper place :

Hail to your purlieus,

135 All ye highfliers of the feathered race,

Swallows and curlews !

Here 's the top-peak ; the multitude below

Live, for they can, there :

This man decided not to Live but Know —

140 Bury this man there ?

Here — here 's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds
form,

Lightnings are loosened,

Stars come and go ! Let joy break with the storm.

Peace let the dew send !

145 Lofty designs must close in like effects :

Loftily lying,

Leave him — still loftier than the world suspects,

Living and dying.

EVELYN HOPE.

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !

Sit and watch by her side an hour.

That is her book-shelf, this her bed :

She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,

5 Beginning to die too, in the glass ;

Little has yet been changed, I think :

The shutters are shut, no light may pass

Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died !

10 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name ;

It was not her time to love ; beside,

Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
15 Till God's hand beckoned unawares, —
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
20 Made you of spirit, fire and dew —
And just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

25 No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
30 Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come, — at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
35 In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red —
And what you would do with me, in fine,
40 In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,

Gained me the gains of various men,
 Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;
 45 Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
 Either I missed or itself missed me :
 And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !
 What is the issue ? let us see !

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while !
 50 My heart seemed full as it could hold ;
 There was place and to spare for the frank young
 smile,
 And the red young mouth, and the hair's young
 gold.
 So, hush, — I will give you this leaf to keep :
 See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand !
 55 There, that is our secret : go to sleep !
 You will wake, and remember, and understand.

ONE WORD MORE.

TO E. B. B.

*London, September, 1855.*Originally appended to the collection of Poems called *Men and Women*.

I.

THERE they are, my fifty men and women
 Naming me the fifty poems finished !
 Take them, Love, the book and me together :
 Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

II.

5 Rafael made a century of sonnets,
 Made and wrote them in a certain volume
 Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
 Else he only used to draw Madonnas :

These, the world might view — but one, the volume.
 10 Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.
 Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
 Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
 Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
 Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
 15 Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving —
 Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,
 Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

III.

You and I would rather read that volume,
 (Taken to his beating bosom by it)
 20 Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,
 Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas —
 Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
 Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
 Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre —
 25 Seen by us and all the world in circle.

IV.

You and I will never read that volume.
 Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple
 Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
 Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
 30 Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"
 Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

V.

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
 Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
 While he mused and traced it and retraced it,
 35 (Peradventure with a pen corroded

Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
 When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
 Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
 Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
 40 Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,
 Let the wretch go festering through Florence) —
 Dante, who loved well because he hated,
 Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
 Dante standing, studying his angel, —
 45 In there broke the folk of his Inferno.
 Says he — "Certain people of importance"
 (Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
 "Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."
 Says the poet — "Then I stopped my painting."

VI.

50 You and I would rather see that angel,
 Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
 Would we not? than read a fresh Inferno.

VII.

You and I will never see that picture.
 While he mused on love and Beatrice,
 55 While he softened o'er his outlined angel,
 In they broke, those "people of importance :"
 We and Bice bear the loss forever.

VIII.

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
 This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not
 60 Once, and only once, and for one only,
 (Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
 Fit and fair and simple and sufficient —
 Using nature that's an art to others,
 Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature.

65 *Ay*, of all the artists living, loving,
 None but would forego his proper dowry, —
 Does he paint? he fain would write a poem, —
 Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,
 Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
 70 Once, and only once, and for one only,
 So to be the man and leave the artist,
 Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

IX.

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abatement!
 He who smites the rock and spreads the water,
 75 Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,
 Even he, the minute makes immortal,
 Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute,
 Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
 While he smites, how can he but remember,
 80 So he smote before, in such a peril,
 When they stood and mocked — "Shall smiting help
 us?"
 When they drank and sneered — "A stroke is easy!"
 When they wiped their mouths and went their jour-
 ney,
 Throwing him for thanks — "But drought was plea-
 sant."
 85 Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
 Thus the doing savors of disrelish;
 Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
 O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
 Carelessness or consciousness — the gesture.
 90 For he bears an ancient wrong about him,
 Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,
 Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed prelude —
 "How shouldst thou, of all men, smite, and save us?"

Guesses what is like to prove the sequel —
 95 “ Egypt’s flesh-pots — nay, the drought was better.”

X.

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant !
 Theirs, the Sinai-forehead’s cloven brilliance,
 Right-arm’s rod-sweep, tongue’s imperial fiat.
 Never dares the man put off the prophet.

XI.

100 Did he love one face from out the thousands,
 (Were she Jethro’s daughter, white and wifely,
 Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave,)
 He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
 Keeping a reserve of scanty water
 105 Meant to save his own life in the desert ;
 Ready in the desert to deliver
 (Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)
 Hoard and life together for his mistress.

XII.

I shall never, in the years remaining,
 110 Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,
 Make you music that should all-express me ;
 So it seems : I stand on my attainment.
 This of verse alone, one life allows me ;
 Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
 115 Other heights in other lives, God willing :
 All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love !

XIII.

Yet a semblance of resource avails us —
 Shade so finely touched, love’s sense must seize it.

95. See Exodus xvi. 3.

97. See Exodus xxxiv. 29-30.

101. See Exodus iii. 1.

102. See Numbers xii. 1.

Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,
 120 Lines I write the first time and the last time.
 He who works in fresco, steals a hair-brush,
 Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,
 Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,
 Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
 125 Fills his lady's missal-marge with flowerets.
 He who blows through bronze, may breathe through
 silver,
 Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
 He who writes, may write for once as I do.

XIV.

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
 130 Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
 Enter each and all, and use their service,
 Speak from every mouth, — the speech, a poem.
 Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
 Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving :
 135 I am mine and yours — the rest be all men's,
 Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.
 Let me speak this once in my true person,
 Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
 Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence :
 140 Pray you, look on these my men and women,
 Take and keep my fifty poems finished ;
 Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also !
 Poor the speech ; be how I speak, for all things.

XV.

Not but that you know me ! Lo, the moon's self !
 145 Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
 Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
 Curving on a sky imbrued with color,

Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
 Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.
 150 Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
 Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
 Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
 Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
 Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
 155 Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
 Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

XVI.

What, there's nothing in the moon note-worthy?
 Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
 Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
 160 All her magic ('t is the old sweet mythos),
 She would turn a new side to her mortal,
 Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman —
 Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
 Blind to Galileo on his turret,
 165 Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats — him, even!
 Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal —
 When she turns round, comes again in heaven,
 Opens out anew for worse or better!
 Proves she like some portent of an iceberg
 170 Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
 Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?
 Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire
 Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?
 Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
 175 Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,

150. San Miniato is a well-known church in Florence. Browning spells the name as it is pronounced.

163. Zoroaster was the founder of the religion of the Persian Magi. He studied from his terrace the aspects of the heaven.

Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.
 Like the bodied heaven in his clearness
 Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,
 When they ate and drank and saw God also!

XVII.

180 What were seen? None knows, none ever shall
 know.

Only this is sure — the sight were other,
 Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,
 Dying now impoverished here in London.
 God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
 185 Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
 One to show a woman when he loves her!

XVIII.

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
 This to you — yourself my moon of poets!
 Ah! but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,
 196 Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you!
 There, in turn I stand with them and praise you —
 Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
 But the best is when I glide from out them,
 Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
 195 Come out on the other side, the novel
 Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,
 Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

XIX.

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
 Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
 200 Wrote one song — and in my brain I sing it,
 Drew one angel — borne, see, on my bosom!

R. B.

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER.

I SAID — Then, dearest, since 't is so,
 Since now at length my fate I know,
 Since nothing all my love avails,
 Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
 5 Since this was written and needs must be —
 My whole heart rises up to bless
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!
 Take back the hope you gave, — I claim
 Only a memory of the same,
 10 And this beside, if you will not blame,
 Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
 When pity would be softening through,
 15 Fixed me a breathing-while or two
 With life or death in the balance: right!
 The blood replenished me again;
 My last thought was at least not vain:
 I and my mistress, side by side
 20 Shall be together, breathe and ride,
 So, one day more am I deified.
 Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
 All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
 25 By many benedictions — sun's
 And moon's and evening-star's at once —
 And so, you, looking and loving best,
 Conscious grew, your passion drew
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,

20 Down on you, near and yet more near,
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —
Thus leant she and lingered — joy and fear!
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
35 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
40 So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.

45 Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,

As the world rushed by on either side.
50 I thought, — All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
55 I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
60 We ride and I see her bosom heave.

There's many a crown for who can reach.
 Ten lines, a statesman's life in each !
 The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
 A soldier's doing ! what atones ?
 65 They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.
 My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet ? Well,
 Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
 What we felt only ; you expressed
 70 You hold things beautiful the best,
 And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
 'T is something, nay 't is much : but then,
 Have you yourself what's best for men ?
 Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —
 75 Nearer one whit your own sublime
 Than we who never have turned a rhyme ?
 Sing, riding's a joy ! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave
 A score of years to Art, her slave,
 80 And that's your Venus, whence we turn
 To yonder girl that fords the burn !
 You acquiesce, and shall I repine ?
 What, man of music, you grown gray
 With notes and nothing else to say,
 85 Is this your sole praise from a friend,
 " Greatly his opera's strains intend,
 But in music we know how fashions end ! "
 I gave my youth ; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us ? Had fate
 90 Proposed bliss here should sublimate
 My being — had I signed the bond —

Still one must lead some life beyond,
 Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.
 This foot once planted on the goal,
 95 This glory-garland round my soul,
 Could I descry such? Try and test!
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
 Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

100 And yet — she has not spoke so long!
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned
 Whither life's flower is first discerned,
 We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
 105 What if we still ride on, we two,
 With life forever old yet new,
 Changed not in kind but in degree,
 The instant made eternity, —
 And heaven just prove that I and she
 110 Ride, ride together, forever ride?

PHEIDIPPIDES.

Χαίρετε, νικῶμεν.

The Greek motto is the announcement of the victor, "Rejoice! we are victorious." The incident on which the poem is based will be found in Herodotus, *History*, Book vi. 105, 106. See Rawlinson's translation. The distance from Athens to Sparta is from 135 to 140 miles.

FIRST I salute this soil of the blessed, river and
 rock!
 Gods of my birthplace, dæmons and heroes, honor
 to all!

Then I name thee, claim thee for our patron, co-
equal in praise

— Ay, with Zeus the Defender, with Her of the
ægis and spear!

5 Also, ye of the bow and the buskin, praised be
your peer,

Now, henceforth and forever, — O latest to whom I
upraise

Hand and heart and voice! For Athens, leave pas-
ture and flock!

Present to help, potent to save, Pan — patron I
call!

Archons of Athens, topped by the tettix, see, I
return!

10 See, 't is myself here standing alive, no spectre that
speaks!

Crowned with the myrtle, did you command me,
(Athens and you,

“Run, Pheidippides, run and race, reach Sparta for
aid!

Persia has come, we are here, where is She?” Your
command I obeyed,

Ran and raced: like stubble, some field which a fire
runs through,

15 Was the space between city and city: two days, two
nights did I burn

Over the hills, under the dales, down pits and up
peaks.

Into their midst I broke: breath served but for
“Persia has come!

Persia bids Athens proffer slaves' - tribute, water
and earth;

Razed to the ground is Eretria — but Athens, shall
Athens sink,

20 Drop into dust and die — the flower of Hellas utterly die,

Die, with the wide world spitting at Sparta, the
stupid, the stander-by?

Answer me quick, what help, what hand do you
stretch o'er destruction's brink?

How, — when? No care for my limbs! — there's
lightning in all and some —

Fresh and fit your message to bear, once lips give
it birth!"

25 O my Athens — Sparta love thee? Did Sparta
respond?

Every face of her leered in a furrow of envy, mistrust,

Malice, — each eye of her gave me its glitter of
gratified hate!

Gravely they turned to take counsel, to cast for
excuses. I stood

Quivering, — the limbs of me fretting as fire frets,
an inch from dry wood;

30 "Persia has come, Athens asks aid, and still they
debate?

Thunder, thou Zeus! Athene, are Spartans a
quarry beyond

Swing of thy spear? Phoibos and Artemis, ^{sister} clang
them 'Ye must'!"

No bolt launched from Olumpus! Lo, their answer
at last!

"Has Persia come, — does Athens ask aid, — may
Sparta befriend?

35 Nowise precipitate judgment — too weighty the issue
at stake!

Count we no time lost time which lags through
respect to the gods!

Ponder that precept of old, ‘No warfare, whatever
the odds

In your favor, so long as the moon, half-orbed, is
unable to take

Full-circle her state in the sky!’ Already she
rounds to it fast:

40 Athens must wait, patient as we — who judgment
suspend.”

Athens, — except for that sparkle, — thy name, I
had mouldered to ash!

That sent a blaze through my blood; off, off and
away was I back,

— Not one word to waste, one look to lose on the
false and the vile!

Yet, “O gods of my land!” I cried, as each hillock
and plain,

45 Wood and stream, I knew, I named, rushing past
them again,

“Have ye kept faith, proved mindful of honors we
paid you erewhile?

Vain was the filleted victim, the fulsome libation!
Too rash

36. “The Spartans,” says Herodotus, “wished to help the Athenians, but were unable to give them any present succor, as they did not like to break their established law. It was the ninth day of the first decade, and they could not march out of Sparta on the ninth, when the moon had not reached the full, so they waited for the full of the moon.” Rawlinson thinks the excuse was a mere subterfuge.

Love in its choice, paid you so largely service so
slack !

“Oak and olive and bay, — I bid you cease to
enwreathe

50 Brows made bold by your leaf ! Fade at the Per-
sian’s foot,

You that, our patrons were pledged, should never
adorn a slave !

Rather I hail thee, Parnes, — trust to thy wild
waste tract !

Treeless, herbless, lifeless mountain ! What mat-
ter if slacked

My speed may hardly be, for homage to crag and
to cave

55 No deity deigns to drape with verdure ? at least I
can breathe,

Fear in thee no fraud from the blind, no lie from
the mute ! ”

Such my cry as, rapid, I ran over Parnes’ ridge ;
Gully and gap I clambered and cleared till, sudden,
a bar

Jutted, a stoppage of stone against me, blocking
the way.

60 Right ! for I minded the hollow to traverse, the fis-
sure across :

“Where I could enter, there I depart by ! Night
in the fosse ?

Athens to aid ! Though the dive were through
Erebus, thus I obey —

Out of the day dive, into the day as bravely arise !
No bridge

Better ! ” — when — ha ! what was it I came on, of
wonders that are ?

65 There, in the cool of a cleft, sat he — majestic
Pan !

Ivy drooped wanton, kissed his head, moss cush-
ioned his hoof :

All the great god was good in the eyes grave-kindly
— the curl

Carved on the bearded cheek, amused at a mortal’s
awe,

As, under the human trunk, the goat-thighs grand
I saw.

70 “ Halt, Pheidippides ! ” — halt I did, my brain of
a whirl :

“ Hither to me ! Why pale in my presence ? ” he
gracious began :

“ How is it, — Athens, only in Hellas, holds me
aloof ?

“ Athens, she only, rears me no fane, makes me no
feast !

Wherefore ? Than I what godship to Athens more
helpful of old ?

72. “ This man [Pheidippides],” says Herodotus, “ according to the account which he gave to the Athenians on his return, when he was near Mount Parthenium, above Tegea, fell in with the god Pan, who called him by his name, and bade him ask the Athenians ‘ wherefore they neglected him so entirely, when he was kindly disposed towards them, and had often helped them in times past, and would do so again in time to come ? ’ The Athenians, entirely believing in the truth of this report, as soon as their affairs were once more in good order, set up a temple to Pan under the Acropolis, and, in return for the message which I have recorded, established in his honor yearly sacrifices and a torch-race.”

75 Ay, and still, and forever her friend! Test Pan,
trust me!

Go, bid Athens take heart, laugh Persia to scorn,
have faith

In the temples and tombs! Go, say to Athens,
'The Goat-God saith:

When Persia — so much as strews not the soil — is
cast in the sea,

Then praise Pan, who fought in the ranks with
your most and least,

80 Goat-thigh to greaved-thigh, made one cause with
the free and the bold!

"Say Pan saith: 'Let this, foreshowing the place,
be the pledge!'"

(Gay, the liberal hand held out this herbage I bear
— Fennel — I grasped it a-tremble with dew —
whatever it bode)

"While, as for thee" . . . But enough! He was
gone. If I ran hitherto —

85 Be sure that, the rest of my journey, I ran no longer,
but flew.

Parnes to Athens — earth no more, the air was my
road:

Here am I back. Praise Pan, we stand no more
on the razor's edge!

Pan for Athens, Pan for me! I too have a guer-
don rare!

Then spoke Miltiades. "And thee, best runner
of Greece,

90 Whose limbs did duty indeed, — what gift is pro-
mised thyself?

Tell it us straightway, — Athens the mother demands of her son !”

Rosily blushed the youth: he paused: but, lifting at length

His eyes from the ground, it seemed as he gathered the rest of his strength

Into the utterance — “ Pan spoke thus: ‘ For what thou hast done

95 Count on a worthy reward ! Henceforth be allowed thee release

From the racer’s toil, no vulgar reward in praise or in pelf !’

“ I am bold to believe, Pan means reward the most to my mind !

Fight I shall, with our foremost, wherever this fenel may grow, —

Pound — Pan helping us — Persia to dust, and, under the deep,

100 Whelm her away forever; and then, — no Athens to save, —

Marry a certain maid, I know keeps faith to the brave, —

Hie to my house and home: and, when my children shall creep

Close to my knees, — recount how the God was awful yet kind,

Promised their sire reward to the full — rewarding him — so !”

105 Unforeseeing one ! Yes, he fought on the Marathon day:

105. Neither Herodotus nor Plutarch gives any account of Pheidippides after the battle of Marathon.

So, when Persia was dust, all cried "To Akropolis!

Run, Pheidippides, one race more! the meed is thy due!

'Athens is saved, thank Pan,' go shout!" He flung down his shield,

Ran like fire once more: and the space 'twixt the Fennel-field

110 And Athens was stubble again, a field which a fire runs through,

Till in he broke: "Rejoice, we conquer!" Like wine through clay,

Joy in his blood bursting his heart, he died, the bliss!

So, to this day, when friend meets friend, the word of salute

Is still "Rejoice!"—his word which brought rejoicing indeed.

115 So is Pheidippides happy forever, — the noble strong man

Who could race like a god, bear the face of a god, whom a god loved so well;

He saw the land saved he had helped to save, and was suffered to tell

Such tidings, yet never decline, but, gloriously as he began,

So to end gloriously — once to shout, thereafter be mute:

120 "Athens is saved!" — Pheidippides dies in the shout for his meed.

RABBI BEN EZRA.

There was a rabbi, Abraham ben Meir ben Ezra, who was born near the close of the eleventh century, a learned commentator and a Platonic philosopher. His writings have been kept alive by scholars, and it is not unlikely that Browning did draw from some work the philosophy here attributed to him.

GROW old along with me!

The best is yet to be,

The last of life, for which the first was made;

Our times are in his hand

5 Who saith, "A whole I planned,

Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be
afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,

Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,

Which lily leave and then as best recall?"

10 Not that, admiring stars,

It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;

Mine be some figured flame which blends, tran-
scends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears

Annuling youth's brief years,

15 Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!

Rather I prize the doubt

Low kinds exist without,

Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,

20 Were man but formed to feed

On joy, to solely seek and find and feast;

Such feasting ended, then

As sure an end to men ;
 Irks care the crop-full bird ? Frets doubt the
 maw-crammed beast ?

- 25 Rejoice we are allied
 To that which doth provide
 And not partake, effect and not receive !
 A spark disturbs our clod ;
 Nearer we hold of God
 30 Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must be-
 lieve.

- Then, welcome each rebuff
 That turns earth's smoothness rough,
 Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go !
 Be our joys three-parts pain !
 35 Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;
 Learn, nor account the pang ; dare, never grudge
 the throe !

- For thence, — a paradox
 Which comforts while it mocks, —
 Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail :
 40 What I aspired to be,
 And was not, comforts me :
 A brute I might have been, but would not sink i'
 the scale.

- What is he but a brute
 Whose flesh has soul to suit,
 45 Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play ?
 To man, propose this test —

24. An instance of the careless, almost insolent, manner in
 which Browning sometimes treats his verse.

Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way ?

Yet gifts should prove their use :

50 I own the Past profuse

Of power each side, perfection every turn :

Eyes, ears took in their dole,

Brain treasured up the whole ;

Should not the heart beat once " How good to live
and learn " ?

55 Not once beat " Praise be thine !

I see the whole design,

I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too :

Perfect I call thy plan :

Thanks that I was a man !

60 Maker, remake, complete, — I trust what thou shalt
do ! "

For pleasant is this flesh ;

Our soul, in its rose-mesh

Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest :

Would we some prize might hold

65 To match those manifold

Possessions of the brute, — gain most, as we did
best !

Let us not always say,

" Spite of this flesh to-day

I strove, made head, gained ground upon the
whole ! "

70 As the bird wings and sings,

Let us cry, " All good things

Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh
helps soul ! "

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
75 Life's struggle having so far reached its term :
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute ; a God though in the
germ.

And I shall thereupon
80 Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new :
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

85 Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby ;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold :
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame :
90 Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know, being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray :
A whisper from the west
95 Shoots — “ Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth : here dies another day.”

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
100 “ This rage was right i' the main,

That acquiescence vain :

The Future I may face now I have proved the
Past."

For more is not reserved

To man, with soul just nerved

105 To act to-morrow what he learns to-day :

Here, work enough to watch

The Master work, and catch

Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true
play.

As it was better, youth

110 Should strive, through acts uncouth,

Toward making, than repose on aught found made :

So, better, age, exempt

From strife, should know, than tempt

Further. Thou waitedst age : wait death nor be
afraid !

115 Enough now, if the right

And Good and Infinite

Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine
own,

With knowledge absolute,

Subject to no dispute

120 From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel
alone.

Be there, for once and all,

Severed great minds from small,

Announced to each his station in the Past !

Was I, the world arraigned,

125 Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace
at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
130 Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me: we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul
believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
135 Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a
trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
140 And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
amount:

145 Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
150 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher
shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay, —
Thou, to whom fools propound,
155 When the wine makes its round,
“ Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize
to-day! ”

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure :
160 What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be :
Time's wheel runs back or stops : Potter and clay
endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
165 This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest :
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
170 Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press ?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress ?

175 Look not thou down but up !
To uses of a cup,

151. The potter's wheel was a favorite figure with the Hebrew prophets. See Isaiah lxiv. 8. See, also, Romans ix. 21.

The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
 The new wine's foaming flow,
 The Master's lips aglow!
 180 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou
 with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
 Thee, God, who moulded men;
 And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
 Did I — to the wheel of life
 185 With shapes and colors rife,
 Bound dizzily — mistake my end, to slake thy
 thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
 Amend what flaws may lurk,
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the
 aim!
 190 My times be in thy hand!
 Perfect the cup as planned!
 Let age approve of youth, and death complete the
 same!

PROSPICE.

Written in the autumn following Mrs. Browning's death. The
 closing lines intensify the association.

FEAR death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
 The mist in my face,
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
 I am nearing the place,
 5 The power of the night, the press of the storm,
 The post of the foe;

Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go :

For the journey is done and the summit attained,
10 And the barriers fall.

Though a battle 's to fight ere the guerdon be
gained,
The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, so —one fight more,
The best and the last !

15 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.

No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay life's glad arrears
20 Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute 's at end,

And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,

25 Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,

O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest !

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128. Byron. Poems ⁶ (selected)				*	*	*
105. Carlyle. Essay on Burns ⁸				s	s	s
135. Chaucer. Prologue ³				*	*	*
80. Coleridge. Ancient Mariner ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
164. De Quincey. Joan of Arc, and The English Mail Coach ⁵				*	*	*
161. Dickens. Tale of Two Cities ⁴				*	*	*
83. Eliot. Silas Marner ⁴	*	*	*	*	*	*
42, 130, 131. Emerson. Essays ⁵ (selected)				*	*	*
19-20. Franklin. Autobiography ²				*	*	*
68. Goldsmith. Deserted Village ³				*	*	*
78. Goldsmith. Vicar of Wakefield ⁴				*	*	*
91. Hawthorne. House of Seven Gables ⁴				*	*	*
155. Irving. Life of Goldsmith	*	*	*			
51-52. Irving. Sketch Book ⁵ (selections)				*	*	*
79. Lamb's Essays of Elia ⁵ (selected)				*	*	*
2. Longfellow. Miles Standish ⁶				*	*	*
30. Lowell. Vision of Sir Launfal ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
104. Macaulay. Essay on Addison	s	s	s			
45. Macaulay. Lays of Ancient Rome ⁶				*	*	*
102. Macaulay. Life of Johnson ⁸	s	s	s	s	s	s
72. Milton. L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, etc.	s	s	s	s	s	s
119. Poe. Poems ⁶ (selected)				*	*	*
147. Pope. Rape of the Lock ³				*	*	*
142. Ruskin. Sesame and Lilies (selections) ⁵				*	*	*
86. Scott. Ivanhoe ⁴	*	*	*	*	*	*
53. Scott. Lady of the Lake ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
93. Shakespeare. As You Like It ¹				*	*	*
163. Shakespeare. Henry V ¹				*	*	*
67. Shakespeare. Julius Cæsar ¹	s	s	s	*	*	*
106. Shakespeare. Macbeth	*	*	*	s	s	s
55. Shakespeare. Merchant of Venice ¹	*	*	*	*	*	*
149. Shakespeare. Twelfth Night ¹				*	*	*
60-61. Sir Roger de Coverley Papers ²	*	*	*	*	*	*
160. Spenser. Faerie Queene, Book I ³				*	*	*
156. Tennyson. Gareth and Lynette, etc. ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
140. Thackeray. Henry Esmond ⁴				*	*	*
24. Washington. Farewell Address ⁷				s	s	s
56. Webster. 1st Bunker Hill Oration ⁷				s	s	s

The following Requirements for 1909-1911 are not published in the Riverside Literature Series: *Palgrave's* Golden Treasury, 1st Series, Bks. II and III,³ Bk. IV,⁶ *Scott's* Quentin Durward,⁴ *Mrs. Gaskell's* Cranford,⁴ *Blackmore's* Lorna Doone,⁴ *Carlyle's* Heroes and Hero Worship.⁵

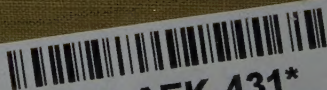
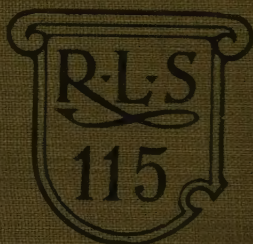
¹, ⁴, ⁵, ⁶ Two from each group to be selected for reading, 1909-1911.

², ³ One from each group to be selected for reading, 1909-1911.

⁷ These two are an alternate for *Burke's* Speech, 1909-1911.

⁸ One to be selected for study, 1909-1911.

But now, O Lord, thou
art our Father: we are
the clay; and thou our
Potter; and we all are
the work of thy hand.



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